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SUBJECT: DAILY SUMMARY OF JAPANESE PRESS 03/10/09

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ARTICLES:

- (1) Encircling net around DPJ Ozawa narrowing, as calls for resignation gradually growing

Following the revelation of his fund-management organization's illegal funds allegations, an encircling net around Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) President Ichiro Ozawa is gradually narrowing. Among lawmakers close to Ozawa, many are still calling on him to stay on as party president, but calls for his resignation are also gradually growing.

In a meeting of senior House of Councillors members in the Diet Building yesterday, including DPJ Caucus Chairman Azuma Koshiishi and Secretary General Kenji Hirata, one participant complained: "Since no apology has been made, criticism is erupting in my electoral district."

Koshiishi replied: "House of Representatives members are becoming restless in the run-up to the next election. Upper House members must firmly support our party." Even senior members in the party have been upset by the Ozawa scandal.

Seeing half of the respondents in the latest survey by the Yomiuri Shimbun calling for Ozawa's resignation, mid-ranking and junior DPJ lawmakers who have considerably weak support bases are increasingly concerned about the impact of the Ozawa case on the next general election, one member grumbling: "We will not be able to win the next election under Mr. Ozawa." A junior lawmaker voiced hope that Ozawa will voluntarily resign, saying: "Criticism from voters is increasing day by day. If his secretary is prosecuted, Ozawa may

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have to decide to resign as party president. A mid-ranking Upper House member also said: "Voters' responses this past weekend were severe. It would be the best for Mr. Ozawa to announce his resignation at a regular executive meeting on the 10th."

Deputy President Naoto Kan and Vice President Tatsuya Okada have been cited as candidates to succeed Ozawa. A mid-ranking official said: "It would be alright for Kan, Secretary General Hatoyama, and Okada to jointly lead the party, leaving the post of president vacant."

Even so, nobody has openly called for Ozawa's resignation. Party members are carefully watching moves by Ozawa. Okada and Vice President Seiji Maehara are now visiting Southeast Asian countries starting on the 8th, so they will not be in the regular executive meeting today. As pointed out by House of Representatives member Goshi Hosono: "They are apprehensive that voters might see the party as incapable of taking over the political reins," executive members want to avoid disruption from being caused in the party by moves to oust Ozawa.

Ozawa conferred on response measures with party staff and secretaries. On the night of the 8th, Ozawa made a phone call to People's New Party Acting President Shizuka Kamei, in which he reportedly deplored the results of latest public opinion polls showing that many people were not convinced of his explanations.

The dominant view among DPJ members close to Ozawa is that there is no other option for the party to keep Ozawa in the presidency. He is the face of the DPJ, and there is no potential candidate to succeed him, eyeing a change of government."

But some other party members suggest that he (Ozawa) should resign at the best timing in order for him to maintain his influence within the party.

Meeting between Kan, Hatoyama

DPJ Deputy President Kan and Secretary General Hatoyama met in Tokyo yesterday afternoon. They are considered to have exchanged views about how to respond to the Ozawa case before Ozawa gives an explanation in the executive meeting today.

(2) Anatomy of DPJ (Conclusion): DPJ secretly finding way to re-form

itself after President Ozawa resigns

SANKEI (Page 3) (Full)  
March 7, 2009

Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) President Ichiro Ozawa, having stayed at home and in his office the previous day, emerged on March 6 into the political spotlight, probably because of his frustration that he would find himself under siege if he remained silent.

Appearing at DPJ headquarters, Ozawa stressed that he had no intention to quit his post, saying: "Although the media have reported as if I am a suspect, there is no truth to such reports." His secretary was arrested on March 3 on suspicion of violating the Political Funds Control Law. It was unusual for Ozawa, who is known as a person who dislikes meeting the press, to talk to reporters. He launched a counterattack against reports on the political-donations scandal.

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Ozawa's aide said: "We are considering counterattacking not only through Ozawa but also by using a team of party lawmakers who are former lawyers." One party executive member is, however, showed irritation, noting: "Since we don't have any information, we can't take any action to support Ozawa, even though we want to do so."

DPJ Diet Affairs Committee Chairman Kenji Yamaoka cancelled the planned appearance on a TV Asahi talk show on March 8. Deputy President Naoto Kan also cancelled an appearance on a television program that same day.

DPJ executive members are almost stamping their feet in frustration, unable to fathom how the investigations will turn out.

"You must win," Ozawa on March 6 told Lower House member Takashi Kawamura, who will run in the April 26 mayoral election of Nagoya City.

A dead heat is expected between Kawamura and a candidate on the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) ticket in Aichi Prefecture, a stronghold of the DPJ. For Ozawa, who said that he would battle the charges of the prosecutors in a determined manner, the result of the election has great significance. If the DPJ candidate is defeated, Ozawa will have to admit that it was caused by the blowback from the political scandal involving him. Moreover, a defeat would destroy the notion that only Ozawa can lead the DPJ into the next general election.

Ozawa told Kawamura: "I'm sorry to trouble you."

On March 6, Ozawa had a 30-minute conversation with Hajime Ishii, an ally of Ozawa since they both had belonged to the former Tanaka faction in the LDP.

Ishii told Ozawa: "Some in the party are criticizing you, but they are not the majority. You don't need to worry about those." Ozawa then replied: "I understand." Some DPJ members will wait for the good timing to remove Ozawa from the presidential post. The prosecutors are enthusiastic about filing charges against Ozawa and his aide over the scandal involving Nishimatsu. Ozawa's direct and indirect messages to his enemies that he will budge not an inch can be regarded as an "information war."

Contrary to Ozawa's intention, there is a slight change in the mood in the DPJ that the party should unify under Ozawa's leadership. A mid-level lawmaker protecting Ozawa said on March 6: "Lawmakers will become irritated on the weekend, and the tide might turn next week." If Diet members see the effects of the "Ozawa shock," they will not be able to quiet down. News companies are about to conduct opinion polls for the first time since the Ozawa's secretary was arrested.

The Kan-led group has secretly launched a study of a new leadership with an eye on Ozawa's resignation.

A member of the group said:

"Without filling the presidential post, we are considering drawing up an idea of forming a new troika system led by Kan, Secretary General Yukio Hatoyama and Vice President Katsuya Okada. Expectations in the LDP are that Okada will become the next president. The main reason is that there is little time left before

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the Lower House election."

Kan's intention can be seen that he wants to prevent all the present executive members from resigning by letting Okada join the new leadership.

The situation in the DPJ is now beginning to assume a serious aspect of an internal conflict with the lifting of the ban on a drive to unseat Ozawa ahead of the indictment of Ozawa's secretary, which is expected to take place on March 24.

At a press conference on March 5, Japan Trade Union Confederation (Rengo) Chairman Tsuyoshi Takagi, the largest organization supporting the DPJ, stated: "We have no other choice but to quietly watch developments in the investigation. There is little information at present so I cannot say anything." However, with the next Lower House drawing closer, Rengo can't comprehend a DPJ without Ozawa. Therefore, the confederation is shaking.

Ozawa worked from the start to repair DPJ relations with Rengo immediately after he assumed the presidency in April 2006. The relationship between the DPJ and Rengo was cool while Seiji Maehara was president. Ozawa and Takagi started jointly stumping nationwide in 2007. The two have held wining and dining sessions with senior regional Rengo officials. There was a time when Ozawa sang a song titled "Funauta" at a karaoke bar. Former Rengo Chairman Kiyoshi Sasamori said: "Ozawa was the first DPJ leader who became serious about ties with Rengo." All the more because of that, a Yamagata Rengo official said: "If Ozawa resigns as DPJ leader, his resignation will have major psychological impact on Rengo."

Ozawa has explained the significance of strengthening relations with Rengo, in this way: "It is only natural for me as a politician to give consideration to the organization in order to receive as many votes as possible."

Ozawa's strategy brought about a landslide victory in the 2007 House of Councillors election to the DPJ.

With analysis of the Upper House election that he did on his own, Ozawa has plotted election strategy. An aide to Ozawa said: "Ozawa's election method has pushed the party closer to a change in government. If Ozawa steps down, everything will turn out to be a house of cards."

Okada and Maehara will visit Southeast Asian countries on March 8-13, as if to get away from bustle of the party. A mid-level lawmaker, who has distanced himself from Ozawa, said: "If something happens, we will ask them to return home quickly. Of course, they will do so." The DPJ's concept of forming a government under Ozawa's leader is about to collapse.

(3) Poll on Aso cabinet, political parties

YOMIURI (Page 6) (Full)  
March 9, 2009

Questions & Answers  
(Figures shown in percentage)

Q: Do you support the Aso cabinet?

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Yes 17.4  
No 74.8

Other answers (O/A) 0.8  
No answer (N/A) 6.9

Q: (Only for those who answered "yes" to the foregoing question)  
Pick only one from among the following reasons for your approval of  
the Aso cabinet.

Something can be expected of its policy measures 18.2  
The prime minister has leadership 5.3  
There's something stable about the prime minister 5.6  
His cabinet's lineup is good 9.2  
Because it's a coalition of the Liberal Democratic Party and the New  
Komeito 48.6  
O/A 0.7  
N/A 12.4

Q: (Only for those who answered "no" to the foregoing question) Pick  
only one from among the following reasons for your disapproval of  
the Aso cabinet.

Nothing can be expected of its policy measures 29.0  
The prime minister lacks leadership 32.4  
There's nothing stable about the prime minister 24.8  
His cabinet's lineup is not good 2.0  
Because it's a coalition of the Liberal Democratic Party and the New  
Komeito 9.3  
O/A 0.1  
N/A 2.5

Q: Which political party do you support now?

Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) 24.1  
Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ or Minshuto) 23.8  
New Komeito (NK) 3.5  
Japanese Communist Party (JCP) 3.0  
Social Democratic Party (SDP or Shaminto) 1.3  
People's New Party (PNP or Kokumin Shinto) 0.1  
Reform Club (RC or Kaikaku Kurabu) ---  
New Party Nippon (NPN or Shinto Nippon) ---  
Other political parties ---  
None 42.6  
N/A 1.6

Q: When comparing Prime Minister Aso and DPJ President Ozawa, who do  
you think is more appropriate for prime minister?

Prime Minister Aso 26.4  
DPJ President Ozawa 35.3  
N/A 38.3

Q: The government plans to hand out 2-trillion yen cash benefits to  
individual households as an economic stimulus measure. Do you  
appreciate this cash payout plan?

Appreciate very much 10.8  
Appreciate somewhat 25.9  
Don't appreciate very much 27.7  
Don't appreciate at all 31.9  
N/A 3.7

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Q: The government plans to send out the Maritime Self-Defense Force  
in order to protect Japanese and Japanese-related ships from pirates  
rampant in waters off the eastern African coast of Somalia. Do you  
support this MSDF deployment plan?

Yes 38.6  
Yes to a certain degree 23.2  
No to a certain degree 13.4  
No 14.8  
N/A 10.0

Q: The MSDF, even when deployed to Somalia waters, is currently not  
allowed to protect foreign ships irrelevant to Japan. Do you support  
the idea of enacting a new law allowing the MSDF to protect these

foreign ships as well?

Yes 39.9

Yes to a certain degree 20.9

No to a certain degree 10.6

No 16.6

N/A 11.9

Q: Prime Minister Aso visited the U.S. in late February and met with President Obama. Do you appreciate the Japan-U.S. summit this time?

Appreciate very much 7.6

Appreciate somewhat 25.1

Don't appreciate very much 33.8

Don't appreciate at all 25.0

N/A 8.5

Q: DPJ President Ozawa's secretary was arrested by a Tokyo District Public Prosecutors Office taskforce on suspicion of receiving illicit donations. DPJ President Ozawa explained: "The donations were handled appropriately in conformity with the law. I have nothing to be ashamed of." Do you think this account was convincing?

Yes 11.5

No 80.8

N/A 7.7

Q: Do you think DPJ President Ozawa should resign as his party's head to take responsibility for this problem?

Yes 53.1

No 36.1

N/A 10.8

Q: Do you think the House of Representatives should be dissolved for a general election right away, or do you otherwise think there's no need to hurry?

Right away 48.2

No need to hurry 44.5

N/A 7.4

Q: If an election were to be held now for the House of Representatives, which political party would you like to vote for in your proportional representation bloc?

LDP 23.5

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DPJ 33.9

NK 4.6

JCP 4.7

SDP 2.0

PNP 0.1

RC ---

NPN ---

Other political parties 0.2

Undecided 25.8

N/A 5.2

Q: What form of government would you like to see after the next election for the House of Representatives?

LDP-led coalition government 11.7

DPJ-led coalition government 17.3

LDP-DPJ grand coalition government 24.8

Government under new framework after political realignment 39.0

O/A ---

N/A 7.1

Polling methodology: The survey was conducted March 6-8 across the nation on a computer-aided random digit dialing (RDD) basis. Households with one or more eligible voters totaled 1,805. Valid answers were obtained from 1,065 persons (61.5 PERCENT ).

(Note) In some cases, the total percentage does not become 100 PERCENT due to rounding.

(4) Poll on Aso cabinet, political parties

ASAHI (Page 2) (Full)  
March 9, 2009

Questions & Answers

(Figures shown in percentage, rounded off. Bracketed figures denote proportions to all respondents. Figures in parentheses denote the results of the last survey conducted Feb. 19-20 unless otherwise specified.)

Q: Do you support the Aso cabinet?

Yes 14 (13)  
No 70 (75)

Q: Why? (One reason only. Left column for those marking "yes" on previous question, and right for those saying "no.")

The prime minister is Mr. Aso 16(2) 13(9)  
It's an LDP-led cabinet 41(6) 23(16)  
From the aspect of policies 23(3) 54(38)  
Cabinet lineup 12(2) 6(5)

Q: Which political party do you support now?

Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) 22 (25)  
Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ or Minshuto) 22 (26)  
New Komeito (NK) 3 (3)  
Japanese Communist Party (JCP) 3 (2)  
Social Democratic Party (SDP or Shaminto) 1 (1)  
People's New Party (PNP or Kokumin Shinto) 0 (0)

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Reform Club (RC or Kaikaku Kurabu) 0 (0)  
New Party Nippon (NPN or Shinto Nippon) 0 (0)  
Other political parties 0 (0)  
None 41 (39)  
No answer (N/A) + don't know (D/K) 8 (4)

Q: Do you think the House of Representatives should be dissolved as early as possible for a general election, or do you otherwise think there is no need to hurry?

Dissolve as early as possible 57 (64)  
No need to hurry 32 (28)

Q: If you were to vote now in a general election for the House of Representatives, which political party would you vote for in your proportional representation bloc?

LDP 24 (22)  
DPJ 36 (42)  
NK 4 (3)  
JCP 5 (4)  
SDP 2 (2)  
PNP 0 (0)  
RC 0 (0)  
NPN 0 (0)  
Other political parties 1 (1)  
N/A+D/K 28 (26)

Q: Would you like the current LDP-led coalition government to continue, or would you otherwise like it to be replaced with a DPJ-led coalition government? (Figures in parentheses denote the results of a previous survey taken Jan. 10-11.)

LDP-led coalition 24 (24)  
DPJ-led coalition 45 (44)

Q: Which one between Prime Minister Aso and DPJ President Ichiro Ozawa do you think is more appropriate for prime minister?

Mr. Aso 22 (19)  
Mr. Ozawa 32 (45)

Q: DPJ President Ozawa's secretary was arrested over the issue of Nishimatsu Construction Co.'s illicit donations. DPJ President Ozawa explained: "I did not think the donations were corporate contributions. I have nothing to be ashamed of." Is this account convincing?

Yes 12  
No 77

Q: Do you think it would be better for Mr. Ozawa to remain DPJ president, or do you otherwise think it would be better for him to resign?

Remain DPJ president 26  
Resign as DPJ president 57

Q: Did your impression of the DPJ improve, worsen, or remain unchanged due to the issue of DPJ President Ozawa's political donations?

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Improved 1  
Worsened 40  
Unchanged 56

Polling methodology: The survey was conducted March 7-8 over the telephone on a computer-aided random digit dialing (RDD) basis. Respondents were chosen from among the nation's voting population on a three-stage random-sampling basis. Valid answers were obtained from 1,126 persons (62 PERCENT ).

(5) Poll on Aso cabinet, political parties

MAINICHI (Page 2) (Full)  
March 8, 2009

Questions & Answers  
(T = total; P = previous; M = male; F = female)

Q: Do you support the Aso cabinet?

T P M F  
Yes 16 (11) 17 16  
No 66 (73) 68 64  
Not interested 17 (14) 14 18

Q: (Only for those who answered "yes" to the above question) Why?

T P M F  
Because the prime minister is from the Liberal Democratic Party 38  
(26) 38 37  
Because something can be expected of the prime minister's leadership  
3 (9) 6 1  
Because there's something friendly about the prime minister 23 (24)  
18 26  
Because something can be expected of the prime minister's policy  
measures 22 (31) 25 19

Q: (Only for those who answered "no" to the above question) Why?

T P M F  
Because the prime minister is from the Liberal Democratic Party 5  
(5) 9 3  
Because nothing can be expected of the prime minister's leadership  
38 (44) 34 40  
Because there's something imprudent about the prime minister 19 (19)  
18 19  
Because nothing can be expected of the prime minister's policy  
measures 36 (31) 36 36

Q: Which political party do you support?



T P M F

Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) 22 (20) 23 21  
Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ or Minshuto) 22 (29) 32 15  
New Komeito (NK) 3 (3) 2 4  
Japanese Communist Party (JCP) 3 (2) 4 3  
Social Democratic Party (SDP or Shaminto) 2 (1) 1 2  
People's New Party (PNP or Kokumin Shinto) 1 (0) 1 0  
Reform Club (RC or Kaikaku Kurabu) -- (0) -- --  
New Party Nippon (NPN or Shinto Nippon) 0 (0) -- 0  
Other political parties 2 (1) 2 1  
None 43 (42) 33 49

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Q: DPJ President Ozawa's secretary was arrested on suspicion of violating the Political Funds Control Law. DPJ President Ozawa explained: "The political donations were handled in conformity with the law. I have nothing to be ashamed of." Do you think this account is convincing?

T P M F

Yes 12 15 11  
No 79 79 80

Q: Do you think DPJ President Ozawa should resign for the incident this time?

T P M F

Yes 57 54 58  
No 33 39 30

Q: Do you consider the incident this time when voting in the next election for the House of Representatives?

T P M F

Yes 43 35 47  
No 51 61 44

Q: Which party between the LDP and the DPJ would you like to see win in the next election for the House of Representatives?

T P M F

LDP 29 (22) 27 29  
DPJ 40 (51) 51 33  
Other political parties 23 (16) 17 27

Q: Who do you think is more appropriate for prime minister between Prime Minister Aso and DPJ President Ozawa?

T P M F

Prime Minister Aso 10 (8) 12 8  
DPJ President Ozawa 13 (25) 18 9  
Neither is appropriate 73 (61) 68 76

Q: The House of Representatives' current membership is to terminate in six months. When do you think the House of Representatives should be dissolved for a general election?

T P M F

Right away 30 32 29  
Around April after next fiscal year's budget passes the Diet 33 39 29  
Around this summer 11 12 10  
No need until the current term's expiry 18 14 21

Q: If an election were to be held now for the House of Representatives, which political party will you vote for in your proportional representation bloc?

T P M F

LDP 20 21 19  
DPJ 28 41 19  
NK 4 3 4  
JCP 4 4 4  
SDP 2 2 2

PNP 1 1 1  
RC 0 1 --  
NPN 0 0 0  
Other political parties 2 2 3  
Don't know 34 23 42

(Note) Figures shown in percentage, rounded off. "0" indicates that the figure was below 0.5 PERCENT. "--" denotes that no respondents answered. "No answer" omitted. Figures in parentheses denote the results of the last survey conducted Feb. 21-22.

Polling methodology: The survey was conducted March 6-7 over the telephone across the nation on a computer-aided random digit sampling (RDS) basis. A total of 1,686 households with one or more eligible voters were sampled. Answers were obtained from 1,032 persons (61 PERCENT ).

(6) SDF set to sail for waters off Somalia to carry out maritime policing activities for first time; New duty made possible by taking advantage of loophole in the law

MAINICHI (Page 5) (Abridged slightly)  
March 10, 2009

Ryo Matsuo

The government will invoke the maritime policing action provision (in the Self-Defense Forces Law) later this week to dispatch two (Maritime Self-Defense Force) destroyers to waters off Somalia to protect commercial ships and tankers from pirates. As seen in the maritime policing activities, the SDF's Somalia mission will be filled with unprecedented events. This article examines differences with past overseas missions, the modality of the SDF mission, along with anti-piracy legislation to be presented to the Diet in the current session.

"China has dispatched (its naval vessels). The United Nations has asked us to do something about the situation," Prime Minister Taro Aso said on Feb. 8. The MSDF's Somalia mission resulted from a "request for cooperation" from the international community. The government decided to dispatch the MSDF by invoking the maritime policing clause as a stopgap measure until the new legislation was enacted. Defining anti-piracy measures as part of policing activities, the government also decided to make a clear distinction with other overseas missions in the past.

In the past, SDF troops were sent overseas chiefly for the purpose of ensuring international peace and stability that was not directly connected with Japan's interest. Their activities were limited to rear-area support, such as the refueling mission in the Indian Ocean and humanitarian and reconstruction assistance in Iraq, so as not to violate the Constitution that prohibits the use of force. The SDF has not been allowed to engage in guarding and security operations that were likely to require the use of weapons.

The MSDF's mission this time around is to escort civilian ships to protect them from heavily armed pirates, which is tantamount to a security operation, according to a senior Defense Ministry official. Such has been made possible owing to a loophole in the SDF Law's Article 82 specifying policing activities. Article 82 is mainly designed to clamp down on suspicious boats that entered Japanese territorial waters. The article, however, has no mention on oceanic

areas where the SDF is allowed to conduct activities. Under this article, it is not illegal to carry out policing activities in waters far away from Japan. According to a senior government official, the government has jumped over the restrictions by going around the law, so to speak.

Because the MSDF is not allowed to protect vessels unconnected with Japan in conducting maritime policing activities, Japan might be

criticized as self-serving.

Given the situation, the government and the ruling camp came up earlier this month with the anti-piracy legislation that allows the MSDF to protect all vessels under the relaxed weapons-use rules. Japan is now armed with the international cooperation system to defend itself and other countries, as well.

"Activities in waters off Somalia are confined to anti-piracy measures," a senior ruling party member emphatically said. But if the MSDF's achievements take on a life of their own, the scope of the MSDF's next overseas mission might be expanded.

(7) Challenges ahead to intercept N. Korean missiles

NIKKEI (Page 2) (Full)  
March 9, 2009

North Korea is now showing signs of launching a ballistic missile. As it stands, the government has clarified its view, stating that a ballistic missile, should it come flying across over to Japan, will be subject to interception by the already-introduced missile defense (MD) system. Prime Minister Taro Aso also stressed that Japan is allowed to take counteractions against such a missile under the Self-Defense Forces Law if Japan would sustain direct damage. However, since there are many technical and legal challenges to clear, there is no knowing the extent of Japan capability to respond. There seems to be a strong element of checking North Korea in Japan's moves.

Since early this January, North Korea has been showing signs that are believed to be preparations for launching a Taepodong-2 long-range ballistic missile. North Korea actually launched missiles in 1998 and 2006. Japan then speeded up MD deployment. This is the first time for North Korea to shown signs of a missile launch since Japan antiballistic missile readiness. An aide to the prime minister is also bullish, saying Japan will "of course intercept" the North Korea's missile if it comes flying to Japan.

The missile, if launched at Japan, will reach Japan in 5 to 10 minutes. Defense Minister Yasukazu Hamada will have no time to issue intercept orders. Whether Japan will actually intercept the missile is left to a judgment to be made by the commander of the Air Self-Defense Force's Air Defense Command in conformity with the defense minister's orders given in advance.

From the legal point of view, such a missile intercept is not invoking the right of self-defense against a foreign country's military attack but is removing danger to Japan's territorial soil and waters, invoking the police authority. If a launched missile does not fall on Japan's territorial soil or waters or nearby, that missile will not be subject to interception under the law.

In August 1998, a missile test-launched by North Korea flew across

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over Japan and landed in Pacific waters off the coast of Sanriku. In this case as well, the missile can hardly be subject to interception under the current law unless Japan is expected to sustain damage. The U.S. military is also little expected to intercept such a missile over the high seas for Japan.

The MD system will detect a missile launch with intelligence from U.S. early warning satellites and will shoot it down before landing, and the system will counter a ballistic missile in two stages. The first stage is that the Standard Missile 3 (SM-3), a sea-based intercept missile mounted on the Maritime Self-Defense Force's Aegis-equipped destroyers staged in the Sea of Japan will intercept a missile.

The SM-3 is capable of intercepting a missile that is at an altitude of up to 200-300 kilometers and has a range of 1,000 kilometers or so. A long-range missile with a range of 6,000 kilometers will reach an altitude of 1,000 kilometers, so such a missile cannot be shot down if it flies beyond Japan, according to a senior Defense Ministry official. If North Korea fails to launch a long-range

missile, and if that missile falls on its way and comes flying to Japan, the SM-3 can intercept it.

The second stage is the Patriot Advanced Capability 3 (PAC-3), a land-based ground-to-air guided missile. The PAC-3, which has a range of 20 kilometers or so, is currently deployed to four bases in the Kanto area and to two other bases in Hamamatsu and Gifu. The PAC-3 cannot cover atomic power plants in Kyushu and in coastal areas facing the Sea of Japan.

Japan has conducted three MD tests in the past. The PAC-3 was successful in its first intercept test, and the SM-3 also made it in its first test. However, the SM-3 failed in a test that was conducted with the degree of difficulty raised. Japan is still in the process of deploying high-performance radar. Given such factors, the MD system has yet to be fully completed.

(8) Interview with Commander Brig. Gen. Brett Williams -- Kadena Air Base brings stability and deterrence to region; Location strategically important

NIKKEI (Page 6) (Full)  
Evening, March 5, 2009

(Interviewed by senior writer Takeshi Haruhara)

Brig. Gen. Bret Williams, the 18th Wing commander, is in charge of Okinawa's Kadena Air Base, which is defined by the U.S. Air Force in Japan as the most important strategic center. I asked the commander about the base's role, its significance, its future, and so on.

-- In this post Cold-War era, do you see any change in the significance of Kadena Air Base?

"First of all, the significance of Kadena lies in its location. It is 45 minutes away from the Taiwan Strait and 90 minutes from the Korean Peninsula. In view of the strategic interest of this region, showing our presence in Kadena for a long period of time as Japan's partner carries great significance."

"The presence of massive air power at Kadena brings stability and deterrence to this region. We cannot see any means that can replace

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it. Kadena sits in an extremely important location in strategic terms, and that fact will remain unchanged even after the U.S. force transformation process is over."

-- There are such views in the Democratic Party of Japan as that the 7th Fleet would be enough to secure the U.S. military presence in Japan and that U.S. troops in Okinawa should station only in time of a contingency.

"I am aware that various parties said many things about the U.S. military, but I will not comment on them."

-- Is it operationally feasible for the U.S. military to station its troops in Okinawa only in time of a contingency?

"Since the Gulf War, the U.S. Air Force has been able to deploy its troops swiftly anywhere in the world. Even so, stationing troops in a given area for the purpose of accomplishing a certain mission would be greatly advantageous. Troops conduct drills, learn the areas, and forge relationships with local residents on a daily basis. That would be far better."

-- Fifth-generation fighter F-22s are temporality deployed at Kadena. Do you have a plan to deploy the aircraft at the base on a regular basis?

"Kadena is a very unique base and is capable of handling any type of aircraft. Several years ago, Kadena became a candidate base for the permanent deployment of F-35s. It also became a candidate for F-22s. But at present, F-22s are not deployed at the base on a permanent basis, and no decision has been made."

-- The Chinese Air Force has been increasing the number of high-performance fighters.

"China's military might is a threat to this base, and so it is only natural to consider deterrence. Nevertheless, deterrence depends largely on the thinking of an enemy. Although we take pride in our ability to defend Japan, if some country reinforces its military power, it is necessary to boost (our) deterrence capability."

(9) Government, ruling parties mulling additional 400 billion yen to employment subsidies: Showcase of additional economic stimulus package

NIKKEI (Top Play) (Excerpts)  
March 8, 2009

The government and the ruling parties on March 7 have undergone coordination with the possibility of adding more than 400 billion yen to employment adjustment subsidies, which the government will provide to assist portions of leave payments companies pay to laid-off workers. The plan will be incorporated in an additional economic package to be compiled after the enactment of the fiscal 2009 budget as one showcase of employment measures to be compiled as early as in the middle of this month. The decision is based on the judgment is that more employment measures will be needed to stem the ongoing trend of dismissing non-permanent workers due to the worsening economy.

Ending dismissals with generous leave payments aimed at

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A new employment package is centered on items that require no legal amendments and therefore can be implemented promptly. The ruling parties' New Employment Measures Project Team, chaired by former Health, Labor and Welfare Minister Jiro Kawasaki, will look into the matter and firm up a framework. The project size will likely top 1 trillion yen. In view of a further deterioration in the employment situation, some ruling party members are calling for an expanded scale.

The state pays employment adjustment subsidies to companies that maintained jobs when they cut production because of an economic decline. Approximately 58 billion yen was earmarked in the draft fiscal 2009 budget. The amount will be boosted in the fiscal 2009 supplementary budget. Chances are that the additional amount will top 400 billion yen, depending on future adjustment.

The number of the recipients of employment adjustment subsidies in January came to 879,614, rising 6.3-fold, compared with the previous month. The government and the ruling parties see that the move to protect jobs using employment adjustment subsidies will continue to spread.

The government, labor and management have started mulling the introduction of work-sharing. The government plans to make employment adjustment subsidies user-friendly to back a Japanese-style work-sharing system. A plan to increase leave payments paid to companies that adopted such measures as reducing permanent workers' working hours and making up for the reduced hours by hiring non-permanent workers, has surfaced. The upper limit to the number of days leave payment are paid is now 300 days in three years. However, the government plans to abolish that limit.

In connection with this, Health, Labor and Welfare Minister Yoichi Masuzoe in a speech given in Showa Town, Yamanashi Prefecture on the 7th indicated his plan to shorten the number of days taken until the payments start. He said, "It takes time to start paying such subsidies. I will simplify the procedures a little more."

Requirements for giving a license to temporary employment agencies will also be made stricter. As part of such a measure, requirements for responsible officials will be made stricter, by raising the standard business funds. Licenses have thus far been given, if applicants have more than three years of experience in employment control (more than one year) and workers dispatch business. The

requirement for experience in employment control will likely be extended to three years. The government will also look into canceling the license of companies that failed to submit an annual report for two consecutive years.

For workers who are not eligible for unemployment benefits because they were not covered by employment insurance, the government will consider providing life security benefits. It will pay 100,000 yen in such benefits when recipients are attending vocational training. A plan to set up a time-limited fund to finance the scheme has surfaced. There has been a loan system. However, the number of users as of the end of February only stood at eight.

As a measure for foreigners of Japanese descent, whose chance of being employed as non-permanent workers is high, the government will help them return to their countries, by providing approximately 250,000 yen per person.

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